THE COMMONWEAL

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TESTING AMERICA'S SOUL

WHEN COMMENT written now reaches the majority of our readers, the Democratic Convention will be in full swing or will have chosen its standard-bearer. The situation confronting the party is not easy. Governor Roosevelt goes before the delegates assembled in Chicago as by all odds the strongest delegate, but the opposition to him is so powerful that even a slight break in the ranks of his supporters will prove fatal. And the choice of a candidate is the least of the Convention's worries. Its stand on the fateful prohibition question must in a large measure reckon with the dubious Republican declaration, which has caused so much furore. On the whole we doubt that a dripping wet plank can emerge from deliberations in which drys will insist upon doing no little talking. But above and beyond that, the Democrats must succeed in propounding something important on economic and social questions. The country knows where Mr. Hoover stands—with the bankers and business men pledged to conservation. Will the Democrats sponsor Mr. Garner's inflationistic doctrine? Will they stress, with Governor Ritchie, the necessity for budgeting the government? Or will Governor Roosevelt's views on tax reform and rural reconstruction get the major amount of attention? These are interesting questions and the Convention which tackles them should make a name for itself in history. But there are even greater issues than these.

As we write, the Convention itself is opening in the midst of an atmosphere surcharged with elements of strife which if they break through the restraints imposed by the somewhat flimsy discipline of the Democratic party methods may easily wreck the prospects of victory in November. The strength of Governor Roosevelt's bloc, which might have sufficed to win for him the nomination without much more than ordinary opposition, had it not been for the abrupt and dangerous effort to obtain the abrogation of the two-thirds rule, may now destroy itself by unifying all the various factions—yet it may in its death struggles wreck the party itself. If, however, it succeeds in winning its will, and Roosevelt is nominated, what is left intact of the party will cut itself sharply aloof from the Eastern party forces, and will represent Southern and Western elements more anxious to fight what they hold to be the undesirable leadership of the industrial and city Democracy than they are to fight against Mr. Hoover and the Republicans. Perhaps

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it would be closer to the truth to say that these Southern and Western delegates who have rallied around Governor Roosevelt—more because they regard him as a symbol of their cause rather than as their positive leader—make no distinction between the conservative (or what they term "reactionary") Republican candidate, and the leaders of the Eastern democratic organizations. In fighting the latter, they seem to believe that they are fighting the former as well. If the persons are different, the interests—symbolized by the convenient Shibboleth, "Wall Street"—represented by the leaders are alike, and are alike abhorrent to the Southern and Western delegates.

The old tag concerning times that try, or test, the souls of men is most fitting, now, and in the months ahead. For there are issues which at present are obscured from the view of most Americans, and which will remain veiled by the dust of the political turmoil which will prevail until November, but which are far more important than the victory of the Republicans, or the Democrats, or the splitting of either party, or the forming of a really powerful third party, or the possible (but improbable) reappearance of a militant Prohibition party.

The souls of all Americans will be tested by standards other than political expediency or party or personal loyalties, or devotions to minor interests. For the whole conception of American government is being tried in the court of public opinion by tests that are moral and spiritual rather than materialistic and utilitarian. Is there a basic virtue in the fundamental institutions of representative government as worked in the United States sufficiently strong to hold those threatened institutions together now when all nations, and all their systems of society, are being shaken by strains and shocks which may be the premonitions of a catastrophe greater than any that has befallen humanity since the World War? Will that virtue retain its efficacy, mainly exercised through its hold upon the conscience of men, during the arduous time when the Presidency of the United States, symbol and highest instrument of American government, will be fought for with an intensity that bids fair to exceed most campaigns and elections of the past? We do not venture to attempt answers to such questions; but we do register our own faith in the ultimate triumph of the moral conception of government and of our economic system. It has been the neglect of that conception which has brought about the power of organized criminality, and of organized and all-pervasive greed. The coming political campaign will not settle the really fundamental issues, but it will test the capacity of our society for meeting the greater problems lying behind that campaign.

Every lie that is told in that campaign—and we all know there will be many; every foul and blackguardly political trick; every bribe; every substitution of selfish expediency for moral and ethical principles, will weaken further and more greatly degrade the souls of those who are responsible, and will deeply injure millions of innocent men, women, and children, who are led either rightly or wrongly by their political chieftains. The shadow of next winter already looms ominously over the sun-drenched land, in which millions upon millions of men and women are workless, and almost foodless. If the capacity to deal with that shadow of disaster, when it descends, is thwarted as a result of the presidential campaign—then he who wins that great post of leadership will have secured an empty victory indeed. In the final analysis, it is not the Republicanism or the Democracy of the nation that is to be tested—it is its religion: it is the question of its capacity to deal righteously with its people who have been so badly misled by demagogues and cheated and blundered by greedy men.

WEEK BY WEEK

THAT EUCHARISTIC Congresses world-wide in scope make a deep impression even upon those without faith in the reality of the Incarnation or of the Eucharistic Presence has often been noted. These gatherings are, indeed, radically different from any other assemblages to which men go. Here there is no objective of resolution or action. Nobody hopes that, as a result of the coming together of a crowd, some pulling up of mankind by its boot-straps will result. Instead the conclave is dedicated to the conviction that it has nothing to do—that the Lord God will ask the soul to be passive in His hands, that to Him is given the monopoly of worth-while human betterment, and that out of prayer there will eventually come not a recipe but a gift. Nevertheless this unusualness must not be too much stressed. This year, for example, the Congress is meeting in a country which has practiced fervent Eucharistic prayer since the early centuries of Christianity. It is, therefore, the most natural thing in the world to meet for worship of the Blessed Sacrament in Ireland. And no other concerns, no business that is purely social or political, has been—or thinkably could be—allowed to interfere with the most abiding of all interests. We are glad to see that the participation by Americans is, in view of the troubled times, impressively large.

Prayer in Dublin

THERE IS likewise no doubt that the drift toward popular versions of a materialism religiously motivated has been visibly halted in many parts of Europe. The heralded landslide towards Communism has failed to appear in Central Europe, owing one thinks in part to the excellent example set by Christian leaders in many countries and in part also to the fact that need is too great and too universal to permit indulgence of those luscious paradaisical dreams which are an essential part of the Marxian program. On the other hand, there has been no wholesale movement

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towards the Church. But newspapers—and neutral ones especially—have reported quite astonishing changes in many communities. Inside Germany a considerable amount of this revival can be attributed to Protestantism. Which is as it should be. No one, least of all the Catholic Church, has anything to gain from losses in those religious groups which profess at least a part of the complete creed. Yet what a different world it would be if, amidst the debating about problems, mankind could rally its spiritual forces in allegiance to Him who willed there might be one fold and one shepherd!

The Pursuit of Peace

IF THERE is one danger greater than another suggested by the most recent peace conference, or disarmament conference, it is that such conferences are liable to make peace more wearisome than war. There is especial danger in this as regards the younger generations. Peace ought to be clothed with panoplies. It should have its banners and its music. True, a symphony of perfect peace might be absolute quiet. But in all seriousness if these conferences keep up as they have been going with their long marches and counter-marches of argument, with "Words, words, words" the refrain appropriate to substitute for Kipling's "Boots, boots, boots," they are liable seriously to impeach the power of secular bodies to arrive at common understandings. If they are but thorough-going gatherings of materialists, *soi disant* practical men, they are but meetings of ganglions and nerve cells clothed variously in flesh, their voices are but sound waves and they represent but irreconcilably opposed appetites. The action of grace, the common destinies of immortal souls, seem never to enter into the deliberations of these careful practical men. Lest we despair, however, it is well to remember that peace finds its power in the worship of God and the labors of immediate and real—not wordy—charity. Such peace meetings are held every day all over the world and there cannot be too many of them.

Aristotle plus 90 Degrees

THE TWO most flouishing modern American cultural institutions are: the circus and the somewhat more modern summer school. From several points of view the two are curiously alike. No acrobat tumbling from a lofty ring into his appointed net deserves any greater commendation for dexterity than do thousands of eager students attempting to sandwich themselves into low-priced apartments for six weeks, and into August courses for the same length of time. Some of the students are hopeful amateurs in higher study; others seem to be competing with the temperature for numbers of degrees. Years ago faculty members tended to shy from the strangeness, and relative exhibitionism, of the summer school. Today they are fascinated by the spectacle. Nor, quite naturally, can one overlook that very especial development in Catholic summer improvement, which is localized at Cliff Haven on Lake Champlain. Here is a place where one can really and truly live while indulging in the arts, the sciences and the graces of existence. For those who like a week or two under the best possible auspices, we can think of nothing more advantageous than a sojourn in the pleasant atmospheres at Cliff Haven.

A MORE special, and because it is liturgical, perhaps more exalted instance of summer study is also to be observed on the wooded heights of Manhattanville in the center of the greatest congestion of human beings in the world (it is tautological, of course, to add, New York). Here the summer session of the Pius X School of Liturgical Music will open on July 5th. The choir of the school will sing the Gregorian Mass in honor of the Holy Ghost in the Chapel of the College of the Sacred Heart at eleven o'clock this day. Courses in all branches of church music will be pursued after this beautiful invocation of the Spirit. Daily at four o'clock, a course in Liturgy will be given by Dom Stephen Thuis, O. S. B., M. Mus. For those who have gone from the city to sojourn, and learn, by a lake at Cliff Haven, the thought of studying in New York in the summer might seem like a penance. But for others who come from quiet places, the city does offer some compensatory shrines of culture, especially as Manhattanville is like a country estate, full of peace and beauty, set down in the midst of the city. It is a proper bower for song from which men and women shall with singing at pleasure "go forth and conquer a crown."

Diogene's New Search

THERE IS nothing in Greek history to indicate that Diogenes was sufficiently prophetic to foresee the tremendous effect that well directed ballyhoo would have on posterity. Nevertheless, for every modern school boy who remembers the Greek fanatic for his austerity, his asceticism or his rather faulty philosophy, a thousand will recall him for his cynicism. And we suspect that the dramatic idea of searching for an honest man, with a lighted lantern, under the glare of the Athenian sun, will account for his present preëminence to a greater degree than his profound learning. We recall the man because of the "stunt." But back of all of this, there was a lesson. Honesty was a rare commodity during the reign of Alexander, and honest men were hard to find in Athens. So we think that back of the cost-to-coast search for one law-reformed inebriate, now being conducted by the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform and The Crusaders, there is a lesson for the drys. It will be recalled that their excuse for jamming a standardized rule of personal conduct into the Constitution, regardless of the sobriety, temperance, resentment or opposition of the millions of freemen intended to be coerced, ran something to the effect that

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moderate men of self control had to be compelled, by law, to forego their reasonable liberties for the benefit of the drunkard and his unfortunate family. Education, persuasion, precept and example had to be scrapped for Volsteadism. The thing had to be done by the magic wand of legislative fiat.

IT IS unnecessary to recount here the price we have paid in crime, corruption and debauchery for that blunder. But in panic times, it may be well to note that the figures of Gebhart, Shirk, Sieligman and Tillet indicate pretty clearly that something like twenty-four billions of dollars have been lost by the American people in available revenue, excessive costs and enforcement expenditures for the uplift of the man furthest down. That ideal may have been noble in motive —but how does it work? Drys of the saner sort claim to realize the tyrannical features of the law and admit the ravages of the evils which followed it. But they argue that the wets fail to consider the countless millions who have been redeemed, reclaimed and otherwise benefited by the experiment. "Show us!" say the young disciples of the ancient cynic as they speed across the continent in their two-hundred-horsepower, pneumatic tired chariot. And thus far, they claim to have interviewed more "authorities who should know," including such noted experts as Mrs. Ella Boole, Miss Jane Addams and Andrew Volstead, without finding one man redeemed or one family reclaimed, than the Wickersham Commission interviewed throughout its entire investigation. The corner meeting, the mourners' bench and the sawdust trail are too familiar to the average prohibitionist—the confidential inquiry of these young investigators will not be criticized. Their bus was aptly named "DIOGENES."

THE FRIENDS of democracy, that embattled goddess, will study with interest the campaign launched for her succor by Henry Hazlitt, in the current *Scribner's*. Mr. Hazlitt holds that the chief foe of democracy is its unwieldy, badly functioning and, so to speak, unrepresentative representative machinery. It is this, rather than any inherent corruptness or stupidity, which produces the inefficiency and unintelligence of governmental administration that we all justly lament; it is even this, avers Mr. Hazlitt with steady consistency, which produces the lack of stature and too general weakness of the typical member of Congress. Mr. Hazlitt's remedy—a special application of the principle of absolute proportional representation—is not original with him, as he immediately confesses. In theory it is at least as old as John Stuart Mill, and the particular technique he advocates has been pondered by others, most recently (according to Mr. Hazlitt) by C. G. Hoag and G. H. Hallet, jr., in "Proportional Representation" (Macmillan). It is the technique of massing the votes of every political persuasion, not within a single electoral district, but within the country at large, with a view to apportioning representation mathematically on the basis of this absolute strength. Its immediate device for effecting agreement is the single vote, automatically transferrable, where necessary, to second- or third-choice candidates, until the allotted number of representatives is made up. What gives Mr. Hazlitt's paper its peculiar stimulus is the boldness with which he suggests scrapping the two Houses of Congress in favor of a single, more efficient, more representative body.

Proportional Representation

WE DO not believe that the American people will ever scrap the two Houses of Congress. This lets us out of discussing the abstract advisability of the project, on the basis of mere realism. But as democrats also—often deeply troubled democrats—we find Mr. Hazlitt's presentation distinctly useful. He gives the case for flexibility, he gives the case for minorities; and he takes the whole matter off of paper, so to speak, and translates it fairly into the realm of actual politics. For instance, the council of twelve which he suggests as an improvement upon Congress, does bring home to the imagination what the electorate's power of choice might be if it were emancipated from the wrong kind of local considerations. For the names illustratively given are those which emerged from the Washington *Pathfinder's* recent straw vote, their order slightly revised to compensate for certain purely adventitious factors: Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Calvin Coolidge, Alfred E. Smith, William E. Borah, William H. Murray, Newton D. Baker, Charles G. Dawes, John N. Garner, Albert C. Ritchie, Norman Thomas and Owen D. Young. And it is hard to see how any intelligent reader can withhold assent to Mr. Hazlitt's summary: "Whatever you may think of any individual in this group, there can not be the slightest question that the average status of its members far exceeds that of the present members of Congress, and that it would, on the whole, arrive at far more intelligent decisions." The question is, can we, within the adopted frame of our government, call out these things and make them serve the public weal: the public's ability to select superior men, the willingness of even small minorities to become articulate if there is a real chance of their entering the record? For we take it that there is no serious question that minority opinion is a necessary corrective and vitalizer of popular government, and, speaking for ourselves, we face the fact that this may easily mean an occasional Socialist in Congress. We suggest that it is not only the general desirability of these things, but the highly specific point of how much the voter's choice may be really widened, how much he can be regalvanized with the knowledge that his vote really counts, in a word, how the principle of true proportional representation can be fitted into the pattern, that must occupy the immediate thoughts of those who would save our imperiled democracy.

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WHOSE BILL IS IT?

THAT the problem of internal indebtedness growing out of the war is more acute than ever before; that some new solution must be found, and promptly; that recovery will be staved off indefinitely until something fundamental is done—these assertions are no longer theoretical but fearfully practical and matter-of-fact. From 1921 down to the proclamation of the Hoover moratorium it was possible to conceive of these debts as "futures." Granted the price-levels of 1927-1929 and a steadily accelerating world trade, the flow of debt-payment moneys out of earnings might be expected, provided of course that credit readjustments could be effected whenever necessary. But today all the reasoning which underlay the Dawes and Young Plans has been robbed of meaning by events. The world's industrial organization is not earning enough money, even in the richest countries, to pay a moderate return on invested capital and a subsistence wage to labor.

So obvious is all this that the questionnaire sent by the League of Nations association to fifty-three leading American citizens asking for views regarding an international conference on war debts, reparations and tariffs elicited an almost unanimous response. While some of the men interrogated objected to linking tariffs with indebtedness—and on the whole we ourselves share this objection—the tenor of the replies is in vivid contrast to the sentiment that reputedly controls Congress. In other words, independent American investigation and business action have arrived at a point considerably in advance of the position occupied by general public opinion. The quite legitimate concern of the average citizen is this: if the war debts are to become matters of the past, taxation (and with that the entire financial burden placed upon the individual) must increase. He wants to feel that the United States will not be cheated out of its just claims, particularly since Europe brought on the whole trouble with its stupid militaristic jingoism, and is even now arming to the teeth for "triumph" in an approaching war.

But perhaps the two points of view are not so disparate as they may seem. We feel that one of the best answers to the questionnaire was that offered by Mr. Frederick H. Prince, banker, of Boston. Mr. Prince, who had studied the situation at first hand, felt that the Hoover moratorium should have been followed up immediately so that the United States might obtain "a fairer and more just settlement under those circumstances than through putting the matter off." Today he feels: "The sooner an arrangement is made the better the settlement will be, and we will then have this unpleasant relationship of debtor and creditor behind us." In other words, Mr. Prince feels that unless we hurry we shall lose all, including that good-will which, though possibly not worth more than $1.00, is potentially extremely valuable. Neither he nor any of the other revisionists is for outright cancellation. What he really proposes is putting the whole matter of war debts through a receivership and then seeing what emerges.

And what will emerge? Historically speaking, the problem of reparations and war debts is something which has evolved from the belief that Germany was a creditor with limitless capital to the sad conviction that Germany is "broke." It is in the light of this development that the obligations due the United States must be considered. President Lowell of Harvard shrewdly remarked, in his answer to the questionnaire, that the debts were to be regarded as "subsidies." This hits the nail on the head. The loans made to Allied governments were based on the conviction that France, Britain and the rest would succeed. Money and credit were extended in the same way as a loan would be made to a corporation—with the understanding that the enterprise in question would thrive sufficiently to enable repayment of capital and interest.

After the war ended, two mistakes were made. First, the Ally governments asserted that their success lay only in the fact that defeat of Germany made this one country responsible for all sums borrowed. This was an understandable action but it was hopelessly stupid. Had the Allies adhered to the terms of the Lansing Note, had they set out to stress the inability of Germany to pay all, their own position with reference to both the United States and the rest of Europe would now be infinitely better. The second mistake was the naive belief of Americans who, balking of being milked after the milking had been done, thought that bull-headed insistence on being paid could solve the problem. Now the only way out is to recognize these mistakes frankly and openly. It remains to work out a solution which will help the world to divide its losses equitably in a spirit of service to a humanity now pathetically dependent for the means of life upon world trade.

Several tentative plans have been offered. All of them are necessarily prefaced by a relatively long moratorium, not conceivably shorter than five years. After that we as Americans will probably have to content ourselves with two sacrifices: first, a curtailment of the interest chargeable on our outstanding public indebtedness; secondly, common stock in Europe's trade surplus, instead of our present written long-term indebtedness statements. Perhaps some such plan as that broached in Mr. Smith's Jefferson Dinner speech will prove acceptable. Or it may be that the final solution will link Germany and the United States closer than they are now commercially and financially joined, with the result that Washington will have to think of lending back without interest payments receivable from Germany, with a view toward reducing outstanding high-interest obligations to the point where repayment of the "political" principle is possible. At any rate, the old days—the days of Dawes and Young era psychology—are gone forever. Butter is $.18 a pound in both Europe and America! At that rate, no cow on earth will give gold.

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THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME

By VICTOR VON SZELISKI

THE DISTRIBUTION of wealth occupies a central position in Catholic social philosophy. Leo XIII and Pius XI in their labor encyclicals both point to the extreme concentration of wealth as a principal evil of the capitalist system. The latter specifically asks us to bring "the distribution of created goods . . . into conformity with the demands of the common good and social justice."

The chief instrument in this redistribution is the state. Much legislation bears directly on the question. All taxation redistributes wealth in some way. Income and estate taxes, which bear upon the rich, go to build and maintain public works and institutions, furnishing income to government employees and "social income" to the poorest citizen who profits by the public schools, libraries, hospitals and parks. The Farm Board made an artificial market for the wheat and cotton crops of 1929 and 1930, and brought the farmers millions in additional income over what they would otherwise have received. The veterans' bonus, debt cancellation, unemployment insurance, the gold standard, St. Lawrence power, railroad rates, the tariff—all these, whether they create new wealth or not, affect its distribution as between group and group.

The national Treasury is faced with a deficit of over $2,500,000,000 in the current fiscal year. Many large cities are near bankruptcy. New sources of revenue must be found; new taxes imposed. This can be done so as to further the ends of social justice, or the reverse.

How do things stand now in the United States? How is wealth or, better, income distributed? How is it earned? How much is wages and salary, and how much return on investment? We must have information on these points before we can plan intelligently: accurate information if possible, but even vague information will be better than none at all.

This paper will consider only the distribution of income. Owing to the lack of fundamental statistics, the latest year for which one can form a tolerably clear and complete picture is 1929. "Statistics of Income for 1929" is the latest available complete report of income tax returns. W. I. King's "The National Income and Its Purchasing Power," which is the best source on the subject, carries the record only through 1928. It is possible to estimate currently certain parts of the national income, such as wages, dividends and salaries of government employees, and upon these build a not inaccurate estimate of the whole.

Out of a population of about 121,500,000 there were perhaps 48,000,000 gainfully occupied, and say another 500,000 *rentiers*. With about 28,200,000 families in the country, there were thus 1.72 income recipients per family. The term "income recipient" includes the unemployed, who in the income table on page 263 are entered in the "under $1,000" class. The unemployed are "those who are able-bodied, efficient and willing to engage in suitable work at the current rate of pay but are unable to do so because of lack of work" (Thurber M. Smith, S.J., "The Unemployment Problem," page 3). The unemployed of course receive income in the form of free food, clothing, housing, etc., as well as in money.

Table 1

	1929	1932
Population	121,500,000	124,500,000
Income recipients	48,500,000	49,750,000
Families	28,200,000	29,000,000
National income	$90,500,000,000	$53,950,000,000
per income recipient	$1,867	$1,083
per family	$3,210	$1,860
Income recipient, per family	1.72	1.72
Cost of living, index	100	77

The entire realized money income of the country was about $90,500,000,000. The amount of the national income varies with the definition of it. Here it means the total of money payments received by individuals for wages, salaries, fees, etc., and as dividends, interest, net profit from business and net profit from purchase and sale of securities (King excludes the last), in a word, all money receipts which the recipient can use for his personal ends. Money donations to the unemployed also constitute income in this sense. The definition permits duplication, as for instance a farmer might derive a net income of $500 from his farm, and pay a physician $100, who in turn paid a garage bill of $50, and so on. These items would constitute $650 of the national income. Other definitions would admit only the first.

Averages based on the national income were $1,867 per income recipient, and $3,210 per family. At first sight this is not a bad showing. But an investigation of the actual distribution of this income tells another story. Those receiving $10,000 or more per annum numbered about 460,951 and received $14,656,000,000. Almost two-thirds of this was return on property: interest, dividends, rents, royalties. It will be understood, of course, that these and other figures are only approximate and are given to several significant digits only for the sake of arithmetical consistency, "to make the totals come out even."

Of those receiving less than $10,000 per annum: 28,300,000 were wage earners, who received $35,000,000,000 in wages, or an average of $1,236, and their income from other sources was probably not more than $2,340,000,000; 8,600,000 were salaried workers, receiving $18,000,000,000 in salaries, and perhaps $4,500,000,000 from other sources, totaling $22,500,000,000, or an average of $2,550; 11,139,049 were en-

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trepreneurs (farmers, shopkeepers, machinists, garage operators, independent members of the professions) and *rentiers,* with incomes aggregating over $15,000,000,000, an average of $1,345.

Table 2

Income Distribution by Income Classes

Income Class	*Number in Each Class*	*Cumulative*	*Percent*	*Income in Millions*	*Cumulative*	*Percent*
		1929				
Under $1,000	15,472,560	48,500,000	100.0	$ 9,567	$90,500	100.0
$1,000-$2,000	20,117,510	33,027,440	68.1	29,487	80,933	89.4
$2,000-$3,000	8,962,940	12,909,930	26.6	21,462	51,446	56.8
$3,000-$4,000	1,994,920	3,946,990	8.13	6,773	29,984	33.1
$4,000-$5,000	720,210	1,952,070	4.02	3,216	23,211	25.6
$5,000-$10,000	770,909	1,231,860	2.54	5,339	19,995	22.1
$10,000-$25,000	339,871	460,951	0.950	5,032	14,656	16.2
$25,000-$50,000	77,039	121,080	0.250	2,623	9,624	10.6
$50,000-$100,000	28,021	44,041	0.0909	1,908	7,001	7.73
$100,000-$250,000	11,648	16,020	0.0330	1,749	5,093	5.63
$250,000-$500,000	2,842	4,372	0.00891	911	3,334	3.70
$500,000-$1,000,000	973	1,530	0.00316	663	2,433	2.68
$1,000,000 and over	557	557	0.00115	1,770	1,770	1.96
		1932				
Under $1,000	31,800,000	49,750,000	100.0	$17,474	$53,950	100.0
$1,000-$2,000	14,383,000	17,975,000	36.1	19,556	36,450	67.5
$2,000-$3,000	2,090,000	3,567,000	7.15	4,914	16,890	31.3
$3,000-$4,000	514,000	1,477,000	2.96	1,750	11,976	22.2
$4,000-$5,000	254,000	963,000	1.94	1,112	10,226	19.0
$5,000-$10,000	473,000	709,000	1.42	3,383	9,114	16.9
$10,000-$25,000	186,294	236,000	0.475	2,714	5,731	10.6
$25,000-$50,000	34,407	49,706	0.100	1,160	3,017	5.59
$50,000-$100,000	10,590	15,299	0.0308	714	1,857	3.44
$100,000-$250,000	3,717	4,709	0.00945	541	1,143	2.12
$250,000-$500,000	687	992	0.00199	232	602	1.11
$500,000-$1,000,000	211	305	0.000613	142	370	0.685
$1,000,000 and over	94	94	0.000189	228	228	0.422

Table 2 shows the approximate 1929 distribution by income classes. Rough estimates are also shown for 1932, based on the assumption that the income level of the first four months would characterize the year as a whole (a hope hardly borne out by events in May). The second column shows the number having incomes within the indicated "brackets"; the third column, the number having that income, or higher. For instance, there were 20,117,510 individuals with incomes between $1,000 and $2,000, and 33,027,440 with incomes of at least $1,000, who constituted 68.1 percent of the total number of income recipients. The $1,000 to $2,000 group had incomes aggregating $29,487,000,000, while all those with incomes of $1,000 and over had $80,933,000,000, or 89.4 percent of the national income.

It is difficult to overemphasize the maldistribution of the fruits of industry as shown by this table. If the reader is of a statistical turn in mind, let him try to represent this frequency distribution graphically. A diagram to the scale of $2,000 equals 1 inch is none too large to show the detail of the curve below $5,000. But the paper must be 42 feet long to include the incomes of $1,000,000 in 1929, and stretch five times farther to include the dozen or so incomes of $5,000,000 or over. While the soap-box slogan that "5 percent of the people control 95 percent of the wealth" may not be statistically correct, one can infer from Table 2 that 5 percent of the income recipients get between 26 and 27 percent of the national income. See Table 3 which shows the 1929 income distribution in another way.

Table 3

Income Distribution, 1929

Showing percent of national income received by given percent of income recipients

Percent of Wealthiest	*Received Percent of the National Income*
0.005	3.1
0.01	3.9
0.02	4.9
0.05	6.5
0.1	7.9
0.2	9.8
0.5	13.3
1.0	16.5
2.0	20.6
3.0	23.2
4.0	25.6
5.0	27.7

The present income distribution is of course a matter of conjecture, yet the writer believes that the 1932 dis-

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tribution shown in Table 2, while undoubtedly wrong in detail, is right in outline. It shows (1) the crowding of the population into the lower income brackets: about 32,000,000 getting less than $1,000 a year (including 9,000,000 or 10,000,000 unemployed) compared with 15,500,000 in 1929; (2) the decimation of the ranks of the very wealthy. The average income now can hardly be much above $1,083, compared with $1,867 in 1929.

Table 4

Per Capita Weekly Earnings in Various Industries[1]

	1929 July	*1932 March*
Slaughtering, etc.	26.80	22.47
Cotton goods	15.40	12.21
Women's clothing	21.80	21.70
Iron and steel	31.10	16.17
Furniture	23.00	15.06
Newspaper printing	39.70	36.57
Petroleum refining	32.90	29.14
Cigars and cigarettes	16.80	12.82
Automobiles	29.10	25.01
Bituminous coal	23.00	16.40
Telephone and telegraph	—	29.10
Retail trade	24.25	21.80
Building construction	—	24.20
Railroads	(June) 31.80	27.00 (Feb.)

[1] From *Monthly Labor Review,* September, 1929, page 199, and May, 1932, page 1214.

Table 4 shows per capita weekly earnings in certain industries now and in 1929. Even the higher rates in 1929, if allowance is made for seasonal lay-offs and time lost through sickness, are hardly sufficient adequately to meet ordinary domestic needs.

Judged by the labor encyclicals of Leo and Pius, therefore, income in the United States is not distributed justly; wealth is not "so distributed amongst the various individuals and classes of society that the common good of all, of which Leo XIII spoke," is thereby promoted. It is a fair question, but beyond the scope of this paper, to ask, what would a fair distribution be? How should the $90,500,000 national income of 1929 have been distributed among the 48,500,000 income recipients? What ideal distribution are we to have in mind when drawing up legislation? And how are we to bring it about?

While it was not the writer's purpose to do more than present some of the facts of income distribution, a direct application of them can apparently be made to the very important question of taxation.

One provision of the income tax section of the 1932 Revenue Act is the lowering of the present exemptions of $1,500 and $3,500 for single and married individuals, respectively, to $1,000 and $2,500. We all remember the howl that went up when this was first proposed, how representatives and senators sprang to the defense of the poor man. It is difficult to see any justification for this attitude when the solvency of the United States is in question. No head of a family will be subject to taxation under the proposed law unless he receives considerably more than the average income. The proposed tax will reach in all about 5,000,000 people, and its effect will be, with certain minor and justifiable exceptions, to reduce higher incomes in the direction of the average, and so bring about a more even distribution.

In addition, tax rates will be raised. There is a general disposition to "soak" the rich with very high surtax rates, a policy which will fail to raise revenue simply because there are very few rich left. The income distributions have been worked out on the basis of total income, whereas net income, as defined by the government for tax purposes, is considerably less. While there may be 94 total incomes over $1,000,000 this year, there may be only 60 or 70 net incomes.

In addition, tax rates will be raised. There is a genpose higher rates in the lower brackets, where the concentration of numbers (and voters, there's the rub!) is greater. Compare the 3,567,000 having incomes between $2,000 and $3,000 and totaling $4,914,000,000, with the 4,709 having incomes above $100,000, aggregtting $1,143,000,000. To tax the former even 10 percent of their net incomes, after deductions and exemptions, cannot be considered unjust by the criterion applied in the last paragraph. In fact, practically all the married in this group would be totally exempt anyway. The present Revenue Act imposes a tax of 4 percent in the lower brackets. As the average family income is less than $1,860, and the cost of living is below the 1917 level no objection could be made to lowering the personal exemption for the married to $2,000.

The estate tax, the rates on which have been raised, also serves to even out the income distribution. It is from this point of view, about the best and least objectionable tax in principle.

But the other levies in the new Revenue Act, the excise taxes on telephone messages, automobiles, jewelry, the import taxes on copper, oil, coal and lumber, have little to recommend them except that they may raise the money. There is still a wide field in Washington for the practical application of ethical principles.

To My Grandmother on the Eve of Her Death

I sit and wait for word that you are dead
Who died to me when last I held your hand,
And watched your numb eyes try to understand
That I am child to one whose little head
Was balsam at your breast; and all I said
Brushed past you like the whir of lifted sand,
While you clutched wildly at the tightening band
Of age before your eyes, in silent dread.

We wait apart—I burdened with the thought
Of trains and hasty parting; you are free
Of such entanglements. You do not know
For what we wait, nor why you sought
To stave off death. . . . God pity you and me,
Who have this night a journey yet to go.

MILDRED COOK.

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A MORATORIUM ON MORATORIA

By HAROLD J. T. HORAN

The solution of the debt problem is one that is now pretty generally considered the keystone to the arch for world industrial recovery. Finances as represented by credit instruments that are absolutely necessary to trade unless the world is to slip back into the unwieldy system of bartering, have become so multifarious, and so many of them are predicated on ancient and non-productive enterprise, that the conduct of current business is almost universally brought to a standstill. Mr. Horan embodies valuable specific suggestions with regard to the solution of these matters.—The Editors.

ON THE morning of Friday, July 1, after his breakfast coffee, Secretary of the Treasury Ogden Livingston Mills will take out of its box a nicely tapered Benson and Hedges, thoughtfully nibble off the end and begin wondering about the rediscount rate. Under the terms of the Hoover moratorium, the twelve-month period of grace for all governmental debtors expires that day, and the fiscal agent of the United States should be thinking about the payments due. But he won't. The Secretary of the Treasury won't even bother to call up Governor George L. Harrison of the Federal Reserve Bank in New York to find out if a check of impressive proportions has been reported in.

At about the same time the Honorable Neville Chamberlain will be bending over his flower garden, deep in the problems of foliation and far, far removed from the problems of the exchequer. Dino Grandi will call on Premier Mussolini in the Palazzo Venezia and they may discuss syndicalism, Alfa-Romeos or child welfare, but debts will not figure in the conversation. Premier Herriot will roll out of the Côte d'Argent express and make for the Quai d'Orsay to tell Philippe Berthelot of the new pipe wood he has just discovered. In Berlin Chancellor von Papen will be immersed in the duties of his new office.

Germany has announced through her former ascetic Chancellor Bruening that she will not pay reparations, and England has pointedly omitted them in her budgetary estimates. Will France rush into the Rhineland and take over the Cologne bridge-head? Will England occupy Calabria with the Malta squadron? Will the United States declare an embargo on all British products and German, French and Italian products, not to mention what this country imports from Belgium, Rumania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, Greece and Austria?

The reasons that none of these things will happen are meshed in fact and in expediency. Europe will have met at Lausanne and will somehow have accommodated its differences. No payments of any sizable proportions are due from any European country to the United States until December 15, 1932. There is little hope that the Greek payments due July 1 and November 10 for $130,000 and $444,920 respectively will be met, with Greece in its present parlous state. Germany owes the United States $7,870,000 on September 30, but this sum can be postponed at German option. So much for the reasons of fact.

The reasons of expediency are no less important. First of all, there is disarmament. When the United States announced it was disposed to make no further motion toward Europe until Transatlantica had "set its own house in order," the implication in this warning was generally conceded to be twofold: reparations and disarmament. Appreciable reduction of armaments and appropriations for military expenditures and a more humanitarian attitude toward Germany on the score of reparations—these are the considerations uppermost in the minds of senators and representatives who eye the entire European problem with suspicion, distrust and disbelief.

It will therefore be the task of the delegates to the General Disarmament Conference to make some definite advance in the reduction of armaments or in the rounding out of the London Treaty. If France and Italy compose their differences and sink their conflicting claims to maritime supremacy in mutual acceptance of the Three Power London Treaty, the first step in the general plan of disarmament will have been taken.

That no favorable consideration can be given to the revision of intergovernmental debts as long as the problem of disarmament remains in its integral aspects is definitely assured. Conciliatory sentiment in the American Congress depends largely on the composition of the Congress that will pass on the measure. But if the Disarmament Conference accomplishes some adequate disarmament, and the Lausanne Conference or some other international group agrees to a reduction on the German conditional annuities, the United States Senate with very few exceptions would be inclined to consider the "house in order" and the stage to be set. Even the senior Senator from Idaho might consider that much had been accomplished and submit to a mitigation of his quixotic demands for revision of treaties and the elimination of the Polish Corridor. The Polish Ambassador Filipowicz, who has wooed him in vain with subtle dialectic and strong food, is now beginning to breathe more freely, having learned that Borah is more than a little in advance of other senatorial opinion.

Over in London the exquisite alabaster hands of Mr. Mellon will be drawing the thread of Ariadne, for the benefit of baffled British financiers, through the mazes of intergovernmental debts. The Sage of Pittsburgh, whom Lloyd George described as ruthless as a "weasel with its quarry" during the Mellon-Baldwin negotiations, can well afford to be generous with a gallant foe.

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He knows more about intergovernmental debts than any other man living, and his contacts with all European debtors as they wended their way to the Mont de Piété on Pennsylvania Avenue gives him an unsual insight into all possibilities of compromise on the debt problem of every country. So July 1 will come and go, and Mr. Mellon will stay over in London for the season. He will whisper a word of counsel in the ear of Neville Chamberlain, a soft-voiced suggestion to the bankers of the city, and the threads of the tapestry will be slowly meshing in Basle, in Geneva, in Paris and in Washington.

President Hoover probably takes a more comprehensive view of the entire scheme of debts and reparations than any man in his Cabinet. However, the hands of the President are tied by Congress, which went on record so very unequivocally as being opposed to any revision or reduction of the war debts that it would be political heresy for him to do anything about the subject at this time. On June 30 of last year Germany was as near financial choas as she ever could be. The emergency action of the President at that time was almost nullified by the selfish and obstructive tactics of France, which delayed ratification of the moratorium until the eleventh hour when the patient had almost passed away. This year there is no especial necessity for any action on that fatal date. The payments due for the second half of the year will not reach their hour of quittance until the middle of December, and so the President can safely ignore the entire problem until after the elections.

Questions of purely domestic importance any way will be pressing upon the President for solution, and the imminence of the elections will to a certain extent occupy much of his attention, though he does not intend to do any strenuous campaigning, as he will go before the people on his record of accomplishment in the face of the most disastrous economic debacle in the present century. The returns from the elections will enable the President to see what can be done in the way of approach to the problem of intergovernmental debts. There will then be one month's interval until December 15 which will afford him an opportunity to decide on the next move in the international chess game of pawn and king. What may happen after December 15 depends on the pocket of the debtor and the temper of the creditor. The United States may insist upon full and integral payments of all debts or, in lieu of this, frank avowal of default by any of the countries which are unable to make their payments as provided.

The President will most certainly be forced to take this extreme step if the Congress of December is the same as the Congress of May. However costly this might be to the United States government in its international relations, it is certain that such countries as Great Britain would go to the extreme limits of national sacrifice in order to avoid the odium of default. To Great Britain more than any other country default would be dangerous. The tremendous sums which England has loaned over the course of the centuries to her South American interests along the Avenida de Mayo and the palm-fringed waters of Botafogo would at once suffer a like fate. Brazilian and Argentine debtors would imitate the example of their creditor. The principle of honor and loyalty in business which has remained throughout the world a primarily British characteristic would suffer such a blow that all other credit conditions would decline likewise, and the resultant confusion would immeasurably add to the world's store of economic manipulation and monetary sharp practice. Therefore, Great Britain will pay even to the last farthing, even if the demands of this country remain as they are.

An even greater consideration that impinges upon the American balance of trade is the irremediable effect upon American international commerce of a too intransigeant attitude in the matter of what we are owed by Europe. The basis of international goodwill, like the basis of social or business good-will, is a certain amount of consideration for the needs or the special situations of others. The reputation of Shylock, which was fastened upon the United States by France during the course of the Caillaux and Berenger conversations, would then assume a new and more intense note, and the chorus of Shylock, most certainly to be resuscitated in the columns of irresponsible sheets like *La Mère Hanau's* in Paris, would reëcho up and down the highways of Europe to the embarrassed and remorseful chagrin of Americans.

But the United States seems to have caught the contagious sentiments of economic chauvinism. Italy is looking for reductions from England, Germany is suing for remissions by France, and all the European countries are hoping for reductions of their debts to the United States. And the State Department expertly sends the ball back into the European court again by announcing that it is Europe's move, not America's, and that after Europe has made her service, then America will see how the ball is coming over and decide to return it with a cut or let it go for an out.

It is possible to prove almost any side of an argument by figures. German statisticians can array a column of figures with all the precision of a Brandenburg troop, and the total will show that Germany has already paid in reparations all that she has ever owed France. A Frenchman can apply the rigors of mathematical deductions to the subject and emerge with a dispassionate logical incrimination of Germany's shirking her legal responsibilities. Keynes could probably take an economic rabbit out of a hat and call it England emerging from her debt to the United States, and this apparently would have all the qualities of sound argumentation and proof. French, British, Italian and German economists would gladly demonstrate how the United States has not only been paid in value received for every dollar of her loans to Europe but has even gained a margin of profit besides.

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Even the most *farouche* xenophobe in the Senate would not care to be known as the person responsible for the bankruptcy of a great people. It is very easy for the Senator from Idaho to cite the insignificant percentage of their budgets which the respective obligations of Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and Germany to the United States amount to, but in doing so he blinds his eyes to the economic stringency which such payments in foreign moneys with all the difficulties of transfer and exchange entail. The German beer manufacturer who owes the German automobile manufacturer can pay him back in beer, but the German entrepreneur of Spatenbrau cannot even get his product past the Statue of Liberty when it is necessary to pay the cost of the American Army of Occupation.

Similar in nullity to the foreign debtor of the United States is the oft-repeated doxology: there can be no connection between reparations and war debts. When this abstruse principle was first announced, back in the days of the War Debt Funding Commission, many loyal Americans were prompted to chide the Secretary of the Treasury for a too, too queasy sense of economic morality. Since that time the dictum has been sounded from the White House and from the Senate, it has been boomed from the House of Representatives and eloquently phrased in the Harvardian accents of William R. Castle, jr., acting Secretary of State. But European debtors of the United States have denounced it invariably as an iniquitous and unjust decision.

The nearest Great Britain ever came to following the ultra-American ideal of the equidistinct nature of the two problems came in the enunciation of the now almost desuete Balfour Note. Great Britain therein announced she would collect from her cisatlantic debtors only enough to pay her transatlantic debtor.

The great value of the Mellon principle was that it assured to the United States the integral repayment of her post-war loans to Europe, provided of course that Germany made the economic resurrection all the purchasers of old marks hoped she would make, and provided that the former Allies of the United States were economically rehabilitated. The predication of the Mellon principle was on the ability of the debtor nations to pay, and with the most palpable evidence that they are not able to pay, the United States still intends to collect her due. If this country, universally acknowledged the best situated financially for the efficient administration of all wealth and exchange, is in the economic doldrums, how much more reason that Europe should be?

And if anyone still believes that ex cathedra doctrine of the Secretary of the Treasury that no connection can be made between what Europe is owed and what Europe owes us, let him consider the ever-growing spectacle of international financial dependence. Let him remember the effect of a revolver shot one grey morning in that luxurious and discreet *garconnière* on the Avenue Victor Emmanuel III. The *commissaire* of the *quartier* came rushing in and announced to the clamorous reporters that it was "merely another foreigner." An American reporter traced the name of "Yvar Kooger," as it appeared on the police records, to Ivar Kreuger, and sent the first despatch which caused the markets of New York, Paris, London, Tokio and Amsterdam to come tumbling down. Signor Pirandello, who lived in the same house with the Match King, could certainly make some of his most cynical observations in a play written on the Mellon theme: no connection between reparations and war debts.

THE POVERTY OF PLAINCHANT

By KENNETH RYAN

THERE is a traditional, if not entirely credible, story about a Chinese diplomat. Attending his first concert of Western music, he enjoyed the tuning of the instruments much more than the subsequent recital. The relentless rhythm and regular accent even of the pianissimos made all but the preparatory scraping sound like march music to his sensitive Oriental ear. True or false, the story serves to remind us that our music as we have it today can be labeled, that it is not necessarily the culmination of the efforts of mankind since time began, but that it is Western, and in the larger sense of the word, modern. A Chinaman can view it dispassionately. We have become so accustomed to the presence of three things in our music—regular rhythm, multiplicity of parts, and extreme emotional expressiveness—that we make these mere characteristics of our music the criteria for judging the efforts of musicians everywhere and in all ages. A point in instance is plainchant. It is not unqualified dogmatism to say that our people and our age do not like it. One has only to observe how little it is used in sacred functions to learn the fact. Plainchant has free, not regular, rhythm; it is sung in unison, not in harmonious parts; it is restrained, and not emotional—therefore it is rejected.

That which bothered the traditional Chinaman has become a necessity for us. We must have regular accent in our music. The free rhythm of the chant makes it sound anarchistic in ears accustomed to modern melodies. In free rhythm the accented note occurs at irregular intervals, not every second note nor every third note, but every second or third note indiscriminately. A perfect transcription of a chant selection into modern notation would require the changing of the time signature for nearly every phrase, and, at first sight, some very acrobatic listening. The ancients used

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a broken rhythm as a sort of literary device in their logaedic verse, awaking the attention of the listener rather rudely by sudden changes. But in plainchant, just as in the verse form, a charm lies precisely in the irregularity, once one has learned to expect it. In the chant free rhythm is no mere trick, as its use probably was among the first poets, but is an integral part of a distinct art form. Chant is a combination of the arts of music and literary prayer; it is not music alone. Because the thought element is superior to the sound or music element, the wording governs absolutely the composition of the music. The word-text, though usually poetic in content, is nearly always in prose form. Logically, then, in the composition of the chant, the music subsidiary to prose was made musical prose. It was given free rhythm, the rhythm of prose, rather than regular or poetic rhythm.

Dom Mocquereau has shown how, through literary history, poetry was constantly casting off shackles, striving, as it were, to become prose. Prose, as represented by the orations of the ancients, was struggling to become poetry. Free rhythm was the goal of both, and cannot as a result be looked on as a primitive form. Prose reached its apogee in plainchant, reënforced as were the supremely literary biblical words with the beauty of melody perfectly subjected to them.

With the introduction of harmony this relation was destroyed. Harmony required a certain architectural symmetry of composition which in turn required regularity of rhythm. Free rhythm, by means of which the movement of the music could be kept in check so as not to distort nor obscure the wording, was abandoned. The principle underlying it was lost to sight entirely and immediately. For at the beginning of the twelfth century, Perotin le Grand, who wrote primitive motets in two voices, had the voices singing different words simultaneously. Three hundred years later, Jean Cigogne and Jean Brasart introduced the repetition of verbal phrases to suit the exigencies of the music. Dufray, their contemporary, anticipated by some five hundred years Ravel's "Bolero"—in an "Ave Verum." Without perceptible relation to the meaning of the words, he employed the trick of gradually intensifying the texture of his music to arrive at a tremendous climax. It was by these innovations, slight in themselves, but coming steadily through musical history, that we have been made to forget the first purpose of music in the church —the lucid and intelligent, not merely beautiful and emotional, expression of prayer.

But one must not impugn the piety of these early composers. One has only to read, in a list of Dufray's pupils, the notation that a certain two were "especially good at singing the praise of the Blessed Virgin," to learn their sincerity. They offered their new and wonderful songs to the Lord, not realizing that they were giving up direct and lucid prayer to praise Him indirectly and often only obscurely in music. Two centuries were to pass before Lully, hearing one of his brisker tunes fitted out with the words of the Mass, was to bow his head and say, "Pardon, dear Lord, that was not meant for Thee."

In the face of the triumph of harmony in the history of church music, we have yet to explain the fact that the chant never developed into a harmonized form. Harmony never became a part of tradition. Official music did not change. The very word "official" explains why. That is official which pertains to the *officium*, to the duty of the Church to sing the praise of God. Though the world forgot the difference between praying in song and merely singing a prayer-form, the inner consciousness of the Church did not forget the necessary precedence of the words over the music. She has always insisted that her plainchant have the primacy because in it alone was the *officium* perfectly fulfilled. The Scriptures and prayers of the Church were set to music, they were not composed to explain preëxistent musical works. Despite the efforts of the ultra-modern composers to describe factories and fountains, their most successful attempts must fall short of the spoken or sung word in power to convey thought. Debussy's clouds and cathedrals, it is true, transcend any verbal expression, but that is because he moves in a world of feeling and emotion—emphatically not in a world where definite and even logical thought must be expressed. Where such a necessity exists, as it does in the ritual of the Church, harmonization of liturgical texts is essentially superfluous—not wrong, erroneous nor in bad taste, but superfluous.

The Church has never opposed the progress of musical art. There is no record, except the legend of Pope Marcellus's temporary opposition to Palestrina's work, of any authority objecting to the insertion of harmony into the ritual of the Church. But the Church has never forgotten that extreme musical ornament tends to aggrandize the emotions at the expense of the intellect, music at the expense of prayer, and outward expression at the expense of inner thought. She has, accordingly, all along insisted that the single melodic line of the chant be given preference over works which represent a later stage in the development of music.

Plainchant lacks the emotional expressiveness of more modern music. It lacks the reënforcement and tension of harmonic progressions as well as the chromatic subtlety of works more recently composed. Its restriction to the diatonic scale and its habitual use of small melodic intervals combine to give it a restraint which fails appreciably in excitating the collective modern ear. But here again there is purpose. There is only joy and sorrow in music. The Christian, constantly conscious of his state of probation, must neither despair nor exult. His most fitting prayer and song is supplied in the plainchant, which can express all degrees of joy and sadness except the sinful extremes of presumption and despair.

Christian art developed from the catacomb scratchings to the technical perfection of the Renaissance painters. Christian music, from plainsong to the magnificent expression of modern composition. Though in

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both cases there was a dwindling of spiritual content simultaneous with technical progress, no artistic age is without beauty. Nothing is more exasperating than the study of aesthetics. One can seek out secrets of technique, and study philosophical pronouncements on the source and habitats of beauty, but the gift of its production is granted only to genius and its ultimate understanding to no one. It is futile to compare from an artistic viewpoint the relative merits of plainchant and later harmonized productions. It is sufficient to say of plainchant, that while not all of it is good, yet a great deal of it is really fine, that at any rate its very syllable and *punctum* is dedicated to the supreme purpose of prayer.

Its poverty of technique reflects the age in which it was composed. As the architects of the middle ages economized on masonry to find the glory of stained glass, as thousands in those times took the monastic vow of poverty to find that it enabled them to feed the poor, the song of the Church makes its renouncements to find itself endowed a hundredfold. It renounces the mathematical rhythm of time to find in free rhythm a suggestion of the infinite depth of eternity. It renounces the expression of the extremes of emotion to find itself rooted thereby in the highest faculty of man—his intelligence. It renounces harmony to find itself made natural. Man sings without effort, he harmonizes after long and distracting study. Plainchant takes its place, as artefactual harmonies cannot, in the canticle of nature, "Benedicite . . . all ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord . . . ye sun and moon . . . ye stars of heaven . . . bless the Lord."

LITTLE DYNAMOS

By S. C. N.

THE "TERRIFYING energy" of small children, of which President Hoover spoke, soon becomes apparent to the teacher who undertakes to control, instruct and inspire those between the ages of six and eight.

This energy vents itself in innumerable ways, most of which are noisy, and some of which are: the rat-a-tat-tat of a ruler on a desk; the rolling and dropping of pencils; the scraping of feet on the floor; the kicking of the wooden rail under the desk; the making of horns, fans and airplanes; the evolving of stringed instruments (of torture!) out of a tablet, rubber-bands and a ruler for a bridge; the constant reiteration of "Sister! Sister!" punctuated by the crashing of a pencil-box to the floor, or the bang! of a tin lunch-box which some child has disobediently brought to his or her desk.

But gradually the appalling force is directed into more productive activities: the recitation (sometimes vociferous!) of prayers in common; the delving into the mysteries of "add," "take-away," and spelling; the memorizing of "pieces" and catechism; the absorbing (by divers methods) of the contents of the Primer and First Reader; the attempts in the art of penmanship, often involving tongues and facial muscles as well as fingers. These, as well as the habit of obeying bell-signals, the free gladness of singing, and organized play at recess, utilize energy, making its manifestations less terrifying and much more interesting.

The little "dynamos" themselves are unceasingly interesting, infinitely surprising and nearly always lovable.

Undeniably surprising was little Norma, who came into the class late in the term. She (and her mother) being just about to enter the household of the Faith, her previous knowledge of things Catholic was of the scantiest. She was taught to genuflect in church, and was so captivated by the novelty of this exercise that she tried "to genubec" every few minutes in the classroom!

One day in May, while Mass was in progress, she came tripping down the center aisle with her arms full of flowers. Reaching Sister's pew, she cried out, in a voice that could be heard over half the church:

"I brought you some flowers!"

"'Sh! Norma, dear, don't talk out loud!"

"Don't you like them? *Smell!*"

She attended a high Mass (her first), and when the celebrant, having finished the Gloria, sat down to wait for the choir, an excited little face turned to Sister, and an excited little voice exclaimed in loud tones:

"What's the matter with Father Wreitzel?"

"Hush, Norma honey, please. . ."

"Is he sick? *Look!*" waving a hand in the priest's direction. "He's sittin' down! Not *sayin'* anything!"

Most of the cherubs are lovable most of the time. Even the little boy who pouts, especially when he suddenly capitulates with a smile, and admits Sister's justice with a cheery "O. K. Pal!" And who could resist loving Eddie, himself so absorbed in loving Shirley Marie? He stands next to her in class, and when he misses, and has to "go foot," with what a stricken look he leaves her side! Marian, with truly feminine expression of mingled tenderness and veiled amusement, is watching Peter, the "strong" boy of the room, struggling with the windows.

Who could observe their unconscious revelations without some melting of the heart? Who could remain unmoved by the evident emotion with which they receive the stories of Bethlehem, of the Garden, and of Calvary? With what touching sympathy they accept the dogma of Purgatory, eagerly "offering up" all sorts of little sacrifices for the "poor souls"!

The eager recounting of these is prompted less by a desire for admiration or consolation, than by the impulse to relate everything —and anything—to Sister and the room at large. Once, when the pastor was giving out reports, and Sister was congratulating herself upon the almost perfect deportment, one James relieved the serious quiet by announcing, in ringing tones of pride:

"Sistah, last night we had tuhtle soup for suppah!"

Following a "politeness" lesson, the children were asked to tell of some courteous and helpful act they had performed for their fathers since the previous day. One little boy waved his hand so frantically that he was called upon first.

"Well, Robert, what did you do?"

"Sister, please," he said boastfully, "*my* daddy's in *jail*!"

Even more pathetic was the story suggested by the little girl who said that her mother was "too busy" to help her with her homework. When told to enlist her father's aid, she replied: "I ain't got my father any more—he went away. But I got a *new* daddy last week!"

Everything new must be told about: the new baby, the new kittens, the pup, the radio and, above all, the new shoes! Every Monday morning there are at least half a dozen pairs to be admired and exclaimed over. New shoes seem really to deserve a few exclamations in a neighborhood where many tots are absent at times because they "ain't got no shoes," and where affluence is as rare as "foxes in the garden" are common.

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"Foxes in the garden" is an expression used in the children's Language Game. The field of language is represented to the pupils as a wonderful garden, in which they are to plant and cultivate beautiful flowers (correct and pleasing words), and from which they are to remove all weeds (vulgar words, slang and so on). The "foxes" are double negatives, corruptions and all other atrocities. Having been taught to recognize them by concrete examples—"Ain't got no," "Never had none," "I seen," "I done" and the like—furnished by their own speech, the gardeners are permitted to cry "Fox! Fox!" whenever one of these is heard. John Peel never raised a "View-Halloo" with more gusto than these enthusiasts put into their chorus! But their explanations and corrections are not quite so voluble, and as the cry is more ardent than the pursuit, a goodly number of "foxes" continue to break cover!

Reading lessons provide countless surprises. Alas for pride and hope when, after weeks of drill and emphasis upon articulation and enunciation, John calls w-o-u-l-d, *"woodj"!*

"Woodj? ! ! !"

"Yes, Sister; sure. *Woodj-you!"*

There is a certain group (not the brightest) which could "read" quite fluently with books upside down—or with no books at all! Having heard the stories over and over, they feel that they know the lesson thoroughly. Most of the time their eyes are riveted upon Sister's face, and when they are reminded that they are to read from the book, they laboriously poke a finger at every word, which makes it all the funnier when they put in (or bring out) their original expressions. For instance, the last two lines of Father Tabb's poem about the child who had lost one of his playthings, are:

> "O Son of Mary, would you mind
> To help me now my toy to find?"

But little Griffin renders them thus:

> "O Son of Mary, would you mind
> Help'n me hunt fer m' toy?"

To him, and to most of them, it would cause very little surprise if that Adorable Son *should* come to help them—so perfect is their faith, so confident their love! But the mysticism and romanticism of the class as a whole is ballasted here and there by shrewd practicality. After hearing the story of Saint Francis and the leper, George raised his hand for permission to speak.

"Well, George?"

"Sister, please, did Our Lord give him back his purse?"

A little girl stopped abruptly in the middle of a sentence to ask, with a puzzled stare:

"Sister, *have* you got any hair? My brother says you haven't!"

This is not the only evidence Sister receives of having been discussed at home—quoted, misquoted, interpreted, misinterpreted! She marvels at the manner in which her pronouncements are accepted and transmitted. Yet she can say with Thompson:

> "Almost I had forgot
> The healing harms,
> And whitest witchery, a-lurk in that
> Authentic cestus of two girdling arms:
> And I remembered not
> The subtle sanctities which dart
> From childish lips' unvalued precious brush,
> Nor how it makes the sudden lilies push
> Between the loosening fibers of the heart."

For not only has she the docile love of the children but a tender devotedness to them.

COMMUNICATIONS

A POLITICAL EMPIRE DISAPPEARS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: A few thoughts in reaction to Mr. W. L. Scott's letter in a recent issue of THE COMMONWEAL. It is easy to becloud the issue of the oath of allegiance to the king with a lot of legalities and technicalities. Leave that to the constitutional metaphysicians.

The root of the matter may more easily be discerned by looking at Ireland as differentiated from such states as Canada and Australia as members of the British Commonwealth. Canada, e.g., began her being in the empire and to it owes her existence. She was conquered for Britain and to her owes her ethnos and demos. If she wishes to maintain allegiance to the British crown it is her business.

On the contrary Ireland is a nation which existed with a distinct destiny long before the British States was created. Britain almost destroyed that nation, but with the remnant left her Ireland intends to rebuild herself into the free country that existed centuries previous to Anglo-Irish treaties or oaths of allegiance. Where Mr. Scott says that "allegiance to the crown is allegiance to our own country [Canada]," the Irish say that the oath violates the duty of allegiance to Ireland. We regard it as an unjust imposition on the conscience of a free people; it forbids us the status of full coequality with Britain. It is as preposterous to us as an oath of allegiance to Ireland would be to the British people, had we the might to impose it on them. It has disturbed and retarded the Irish people for a decade; it must go if we are to be reconciliated whole-heartedly with Britain. Firm friendship and coöperation will then be possible between the two peoples.

Nor would disavowal of the oath exclude Ireland from the commonwealth unless the rest of the dominions decided for it. In that eventuality Ireland should acquiesce. President De Valera's immediate purpose is the abolition of the oath, and he is not empowered to seek advice from the isolated dominions, since it is logically a domestic question and the sole business of the Irish people. Whatever the resulting status of the commonwealth, Ireland must stand on equal ground with Britain as a country with full freedom. Not a little hullabaloo has come from the United States and from the dominions regarding Ireland's wish to abolish the oath; but all that is quite unnecessary. President De Valera will follow his planned program unflinchingly to rebuild an Irish Ireland.

By and large I have begun to doubt the efficacy of the "Union of British States" as an instrument of international development. I believe that in its present status it is outworn and is possibly more of a hindrance than generally realized to the normal economic welfare of the world. It is only by the constant efforts of astute minds that it keeps cohesion and remains running, and it seems these minds might be better devoted to the more general interests and amicable relationships of all nations. The world can ill-afford today the burden of any such privileged union of states, so mutually exclusive to the rest of the nations in trade and other interests. From the geographical premise alone it seems highly preposterous and untenable; and there seems no distinct benefit from it, save perhaps to Britain. The empire was founded and for a time maintained on piracy and rapine, and in the new order of the world it must loosen even the formal ties when they have come to symbolize nothing. The political genius of the British Empire is a hundred years behind the times.

THOMAS F. HEALY.

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PRO AND CON PROHIBITION

Coeur d'Alene, Ida.

TO the Editor: Speaking of prohibition, as I occasionally do, I desire to quote below a very strong passage against prohibitionists by Saint John Chrysostom (John of the Golden Mouth), the greatest preacher of the Christian Church. They had these "dry" pests even in the early age of the Church. The most prominent of the "dry" sects were the Manicheans, the Marcionites and the Encratites. But as the Christian Church was strong in those early days, and as it was ruled and guided by a remarkable company of strong, devoted, wise and great men —namely, the famous Fathers of the Church—the "dry" fanatics were not able to impose their false doctrine.

The famous homilies, or short sermons, of John of the Golden Mouth, are like the golden accents of an angel from heaven pleading with men to be good. John Chrysostom was against prohibition. Therefore I am against it, and I hope my chance of going to heaven is as good as his. Speaking of drunken women, in his "Commentary on Matthew," Chrysostom says:

"They cause the gifts of God to be blasphemously spoken of by foolish men. But do not so; for this is of a satanical mind; do not find fault with the wine, but with the drunkenness. For instance, I hear many say, when these excesses happen, 'Would there were no wine.' O folly! O madness! When other men sin, dost thou find fault with God's gifts? And what great madness is this? What? Did the wine, O man, produce this evil? Not the wine, but the intemperance of such as take an evil delight in it. Say, then, 'Would there were no drunkenness, no luxury'; but if thou say, 'Would there were no wine,' thou wilt say, going on by degrees, 'Would there were no steel, because of the murderers; no night, because of the thieves; no light, because of the informers; no women, because of adulteries'; and, in a word, thou wilt destroy all."

CHARLES HOOPER.

Philadelphia, Pa.

TO the Editor: As a constant reader of your magazine, please permit me to express my belief in the prohibition amendment and my hope for its continuance. I have given the subject careful consideration in the last few years. By reason of my Irish birth and my training in the parochial schools up to the college age, I suppose that my friends often wonder why I hold what they consider peculiar views on this question.

One of the vivid memories which I retain of my childhood in Ireland is the recollection of the "public house." There were four on the street in which I was born, within the radius of a block. The people of Ireland have carried the vice of intemperance, supposedly a national characteristic in the matter of liquor, so far that it is difficult to secure the closing of the public houses even on a holiday. I would like to see President De Valera enforce stringent regulation of the sale of liquor.

After coming to this country in 1916, my father's occupation resulted in my attending a number of schools in various cities of the East in which he was located. Everywhere the same conditions prevailed. The frequency of the saloon and the conditions associated with it cannot be forgotten easily.

I hope that the traffic and sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage will never be legalized again. Were the people to rouse themselves and take cognizance of the corruption and inefficiency which is characteristic of every phase of public office in the United States, I believe that the enforcement of prohibition would not be such a difficult proposition.

BRENDEN O'DWYER.

A REFUGE OF THE JOBLESS

Augusta, Ga.

TO the Editor: May I add an unsolicited word to Mr. Herbert Reed's tribute in THE COMMONWEAL of March 16, to social service rendered by the Graymoor Friars?

St. Christopher's Inn is undoubtedly the most characteristically Franciscan part of Graymoor. The Society of the Atonement does, however, carry on other good works of equally authentic Catholicity: furthering good-will among Protestants and Jews toward Catholicism, reconciling non-Catholics to Catholic unity, educating worthy boys, providing informal retreats of varying lengths of time to laymen and priests, purchasing and supporting Chinese babies, helping the Catholic Near East Welfare and Catholic Medical Missions, as well as numerous associations of prayer, self-denial and almsgiving. For example, the Graymoor Union-That-Nothing-Be-Lost, Incorporated, from July 1, 1931, to September 30, 1931, disbursed $17,755.33 in alms to the Catholic Church in Africa, China, Europe, India, Japan, Philippine Islands and America—regardless of religious order or rite.

The Graymoor Friars willingly deny themselves all use of nicotine and alcohol. They loan money to many needy persons (oftentimes at no interest). They are making a sincere effort to obey the law of the Roman Rite with regard to congregational plainsong. Their hospitality is frugal, undiscriminating. Doubtless this young congregation of religious has its weaknesses, but no one can visit Graymoor with his eyes open and his mind unprejudiced and come away without an access of Christian faith, hope and charity. There he finds an admirable cross-section of practical Catholicism. There he sees priests and brothers actually dispensing food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, hospitality to the homeless, clothing to the naked, comfort to the sick, aid to former prisoners. Why do not the inmates of more American monasteries do likewise? Our Lord assures us such service is the one, infallible test of our love of God "Whom we have not seen."

LAWRENCE MAYNARD GRAY.

BUSES VS. TRAINS

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor: The idea which "one of the Youngstown steel men" voiced, is not one "that other people have been talking about for years." On the other hand, a certain "nobody" has "thought of it before."

I never heard anyone else suggest the conversion of our railway roadbeds into concrete express highways for buses and trucks to be operated by the railroads. But as a totally unimportant bit of historical data, let me record that probably four years ago, if not earlier, the idea occurred to me, and I have occasionally talked it over with friends while dodging buses and trucks on some road running parallel with some sad and lonely stretch of branch railroad falling into desuetude.

I am glad the idea has taken root in minds that can do more to advance it. I fancy it will come about. But I earnestly hope that buses will first be brought to a point nearer perfection. Bus transportation today is abysmally inferior to train riding. The present-day bus, for all its pretentious appearance and deep upholstery, represents a return to the discomforts and barbarities of the stage-coach, a denial of all the marvellous developments toward comfort achieved by the railroads. Let editors, interested in a reading public, go slow in praising the bus, in view of this one fact: You can read in a railroad car, but you cannot read in a bus!

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

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BOOKS

The Socialist Prophet

As I See It, by Norman Thomas. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THIS volume presents a collection of essays rather than a connected argument. It deals with economics, politics, peace and the churches. The author is not a Communist nor even an orthodox Marxian. He believes that insistence upon class war "will lead to war and dictatorship; not to peace and a wiser democracy."

One of the best chapters is that on economic planning. In his opinion, most of the schemes for a controlled economy thus far put forth are "not plans but incantations." The one formulated by Mr. Gerard Swope is a kind of capitalist syndicalism and, even though it might work for a time, it would not bring about true prosperity nor reasonable economic equality. He finds Professor Charles A. Beard's plan the least objectionable of those that have received much attention. No plan will be adequate that does not aim at general usefulness rather than private profit, and this end will be impossible of attainment without collective ownership or at least control of the vital economic enterprises. He asks whether planning is compatible with political democracy and with the freedom of consumers' choice of goods and laborers' choice of jobs, but declares that these questions cannot be answered with absolute certainty. He thinks, however, that planning will be more aided than hurt by retaining money and the mechanism of profit, and by allowing men a considerable choice in their purchases and in the jobs at which they work. This chapter adds one more to the long list of indications that the problem of a planned economic society is not only a long way from solution but has not yet been stated in terms that satisfy the framers themselves.

In the chapter entitled "The Churches and an End of an Epoch," the author declares that the ethics of charity is "wholly incompatible with capitalism and its god, profit." While he thinks that the Catholic Church is "amazingly on the defensive" in Spain, Latin America and Italy, he admits that "the historic Church's magnificent organization, its knowledge of the human soul, its ancient and impressive ritual, guarantee it a better hope of earthly immortality than a divided and sorely perplexed Protestantism." The picture which he draws of his father and grandfather who were Presbyterian ministers, and the home in which he grew up, is on the whole attractive. Apparently he has not broken entirely with the "faith of his fathers" even though his conception of the relation between religion and economic life is considerably different from that held by his father and grandfather. He still believes that the problem of the existence and nature of God is at the heart of true and deep religion, and seems to be sceptical about the sufficiency of economic security and social equality as substitutes for the ancient beliefs.

JOHN A. RYAN.

A Writer Who Wrote

The Journal of Arnold Bennett, 1896-1910. New York: The Viking Press. $4.00.

ARNOLD BENNETT has been accused of being a sort of sublimated literary hack, and for those who have thus accused him there will be added ammunition in this first volume of his colossal "Journal." Like Anthony Trollope in his "Autobiography," Bennett devotes pages to the number of words he writes per day and to the sums of money he receives for his stories, and nowhere does he mount on any artistic Pegasus or even formulate any theory of life or philosophic ideal of conduct. He is, at least explicitly, simply a canny business man possessed of an enormous curiosity about people—the reporter raised to the nth degree.

And yet Arnold Bennett wrote one novel at least which will remain in English literature, "The Old Wives' Tale," a book in which the power of observation is so intensified that it reaches the rank of true creation. "The Old Wives' Tale" is an admirable example of what gusto for life can accomplish with a mind essentially of rather ordinary stuff, and the "Journal" provides a daily insight into the processes of this mind. Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Mine is a commonplace mind highly energized"; and such is the mind of Arnold Bennett as revealed in his "Journal."

Energy, honesty, and keenness of sight are the three virtues which inform this volume. No matter who he meets or where he goes, Bennett's eyes are open to the least as well as the most significant detail, and often the apparently insignificant opens the deepest vistas. Take, for a striking example, the incident at Duval's in Paris which was the genesis for "The Old Wives' Tale"—the fat, middle-aged woman who had a seat at Bennett's table and who got up angrily when he arrived and moved to another table. Here was apparently an utterly trivial moment, and yet the novelist's sympathy and clarity of vision saw at a flash the tragic possibilities in this almost comic figure.

Bennett may have been a hack, but he was an honest hack. He never deluded himself, and he was an extraordinarily just appraiser of the worth of what he wrote. He loved life and he accepted the values of the world. This is what makes his "Journal" such fascinating reading. It is no mere coincidence which caused him to choose France as his place of abode and to marry a Frenchwoman. France was to him no ideal of art or romantic land of escape, but the home of realism. Bennett went to it instinctively. And that going was a symbol of both his strength and his limitation.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

With Rosy Glow

Owen D. Young: A New Type of Industrial Leader, by Ida M. Tarbell. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

HAD THE subject of this biography been consulted, he doubtless would have preferred, like Oliver Cromwell, to be painted "warts and all." The spectacular evolution of the farm boy of Van Hornesville, and the contagious enthusiasm of Owen D. Young's associates and friends who supplied much of the material, proved too stimulating for the biographer, who paints an idealistic and highly varnished portrait. On the whole, however, Miss Tarbell has achieved the task of revealing to a questioning generation the secret of Owen D. Young's success in life, and the part which the history of his times plays as a contributing influence. The reader is borne on the upward curve of a career which is typical in many respects of a pioneering America that produced our greatest men. In the background are the farm and its chores and the simplicities of rural life, the farm hand who kindled the lad's imagination with tales of the outer world, the schoolmaster who fired his ambition, and the striking figure of a mother who lived to see her dreams come true.

College life and the first years of legal practice in Boston prepared Owen D. Young for greater tasks by the aptitude he displayed for the mastery of the most intricate details, combined with the faculty for detaching essentials from non-essentials. One is impressed by the cumulative evidence of hard work as

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the disciplinary process through which he reached the loftier heights of fame in national and international affairs. In addition to his own natural gifts and acquirements he had in particular the capacity for making friends. At every critical stage in his career the door of opportunity turns on its hinges at the bidding of some friend who discovered both in boy and man qualities that make for success.

In her life of Owen D. Young, Miss Tarbell not only makes her public better acquainted with a man who sees moral problems in fluctuating exchange rates, and who thinks in terms of human beings, but also provides an introduction to the study of national problems, to the solution of which Mr. Young brings a mind receptive to new ideas.

LINDSAY CRAWFORD.

Understanding Japan

Japan and America, by Henry W. Taft. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

IN 1920 the "Welcome Society" of Japan (a private association of public men) invited the author to be one of a small party headed by the ubiquitous Mr. Frank Vanderlip, to visit Japan and study certain vexatious matters at first hand.

It was an astute choice. Admittedly a sceptic, as far as he knew anything at all about Japan, Mr. Taft makes an impressive convert. He is convinced and positive that ". . . our own national aims in the Orient can be best subserved by bringing about good understanding and cordial relations between the peoples of Japan and the United States; but friendly coöperation with Japan . . . does not involve our taking a position which is anti-Chinese."

One reason why some appearance of partizanship does seem to have crept into our diplomacy is that our Far Eastern experts are generally drawn from China, while Japan, as a "war problem," is mostly left to the Navy to study.

In the ten years following his visit Mr. Taft studied the danger points in our relations with Japan, in the light of what he had gleaned at first hand from their statesmen and publicists. As is natural, he gives a large part of his book to analysis of the immature (or disingenuous) attitude of certain senators with regard to the "Gentleman's Agreement," the treaties of 1911 and 1924, and the effect of the Hanihara letter. He records the steady loss of gains made by Hay, Root and Hughes, by the Disarmament Conference and the Nine Power Treaty, up to the Shanghai and Manchurian operations.

From a light book of travel under peculiarly agreeable conditions the narrative becomes a demonstration of unanswerable reasons why American diplomacy could not expect to be effective in the Far East in the recent past or in the discernible future.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

Popgun or Pistol?

Hitler, by Emil Lengyel. New York: The Dial Press. $3.00.

DURING the past month Europe has marshaled data for the Lausanne Conference, discussion of which has lagged in the United States, although there is not an observer of financial or political affairs who does not feel sure that this meeting will prove to be of fateful interest to the United States. Now the actual status of Germany is still a matter of dispute. Commissions agree that trying to collect reparations would be a manifestation of insanity at the present time, but nobody knows whether the social and economic structure of the Reich can survive the test apart from those reparations.

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More and more people are coming to accept the view that Adolph Hitler is the most useful of all symbols of contemporary Germany. Older explanations to the effect that this would-be dictator and saber-rattler has somehow been "pushed" into his present status by militarists and industrialists are rapidly being discredited even by hostile extremists. Nor is the man an individual in whom the "older Germany" is recrudescent. Hitler is just simply hysteria, and a good two-thirds of the German people are hysterical. Why? Because a magnificent effort to rebuild seems to have failed after a decade of the hardest kind of work. Because the logical solution of their woes appears to be Communism, which virtually no German really wants. Because under a threat of almost universal unemployment, the German worker is at his wits' end. That Hitler is a fool does not greatly help the rest of us, who have all been fools upon occasion.

Emil Lengyel has written the best of all evocations of the Hitler personality and psychology. The book describes the rise of the Nazi leader, discusses the formation and growth of the party, and offers a shrewd, ironical interpretation of the state of mind which has produced the rhetoric and doctrine now identified with brown shirts. The author writes agreeably and lucidly, with knowledge of conditions and insight into trends of thought and feeling. Though the conclusions of any such volume are subject to change at the hands of events, there is comparatively little in Mr. Lengyel's book for which, as an historian, he will need to apologize.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

An Italian Life of Saint Francis

San Francesco d'Assisi, by Maria Sticco. Milano: Societa Editrice "Vita e Pensiero." Lire 6.

FATHER GEMELLI, head of the Catholic University in Milan, wrote a preface for the first edition of this life of Saint Francis. Being the best-known educator in Catholic Italy, he wrote it with moderation and a sense of proportion. He pointed out the existence of a vast literature on the subject, admitted that it was difficult to write satisfactorily anything new, but stated that, since the editors of the "Vita e Pensiero" series wished to include a new life of the saint, he had chosen Maria Sticco as best fitted to write it. By thus providing a serious preface instead of an advertisement, he achieved the inevitable result that all hostile critics triumphantly quoted him at length in disparagement of the book. So that for this second edition he has written a second preface, a justifiable mixture of amusement and charity in which his approval is made clear to any eye that will read. So much for literary history.

As a matter of fact, this book is so exceptionally interesting that the attention of American readers is called to it in spite of there being available as yet no translation. It breaks free from a certain intolerable atmosphere of Franciscan legend which so often destroys poetry by reducing life to poetry alone. Knowledge by means of tradition is of great importance but legend is something else. Legend is not merely a careless handling of facts; it is a treatment of facts, in themselves true or false, which makes us indifferent as to their reality. It is a disembodied symbolism, whereas true poetry is intensely active life and not superimposed imagery. It is the steel or concrete of a bridge or building and not the wafer-thin pretense of marble with which we cover them. The poetry of Saint Francis is in his life rather than in the forms of it that have become poetized. And it is only a loss of contact with reality, a loss of historical sense, that causes the usual tendency to portray him, and how many other saints, in the pinks, greys and blues with which

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Marie Laurencin depicts very different and disquieting characters. This remarkable book is the life of, and not poetry about Saint Francis. His hunger for God, it is made clear, and his hunger for bread were never flowery images in a perpetual Italian spring, nor was he humble only in the frescoes at Assisi, but in a country and time when humility was as generally despised as it is in America today.

GOUVERNEUR PAULDING.

Symbolic Fiction

Czardas, by Jeno Haltai; translated from the Hungarian by Warre B. Wells. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

"CZARDAS" is a very unusual novel. Though it is a story of the war, largely concerned with the interpretation of Freudian symbols, it manages to achieve individuality.

Peter Karmel is wounded and spends weeks in a military hospital, haunted in his delirium by the sinister figure of a blind man whose monotonous tap-tapping with his iron-shod cane threatens the sick man's reason. Later the soothing figure of a white porcelain dancer appears. Finally he is discharged and he returns to Budapest, where he wanders aimlessly about until the recurring visions of the blind man and the porcelain lady cause him to attempt the reconstruction of his past.

The porcelain dancer leads him to his childhood and to a little girl whom he had worshiped from afar. He finds her at last, but what a creature she has become! He blames himself for her deterioration, and it seems that they might find the meaning of life together. But she is now incapable of any great depth of affection. He goes on alone, but now understands the full significance of his visions. They are not merely Freudian symbols of the subconscious mind, but rather age-old warring elements. Love? No, it is too late. Hatred? Nothing matters that much. But death—ah yes, the blind man shall have his innings.

The story is well written and has a wealth of poetic imagery. Perhaps the author's reticence concerning the importance of spiritual values—which would solve Peter Karmel's problems—is more eloquent than brilliantly written passages dwelling upon it. At any rate, the book speaks for itself.

DORIS CUNNINGHAM.

A Woman without a Country

Holy Prayers in a Horse's Ear, by Kathleen Tamagawa. New York: Ray Long and Richard R. Smith, Incorporated. $2.00.

THE AUTHOR of this autobiography, Kathleen Tamagawa, has chosen her title, "Holy Prayers in a Horse's Ear," because she has, throughout her life, been in the position indicated by this Japanese proverb: not only unable to achieve intimacy or friendship, but finding it impossible even to communicate ideas and impressions. As the child of a Japanese father, she has been regarded as altogether alien by Americans and Europeans; while in Japan she has been even more definitely an outsider, because, besides having an Irish-American mother, she herself was born and educated in the United States.

A great book might have been written about such a life, but it would have to be far more emotional and subjective than this, which is in large part a travel diary interspersed with anecdotes. Strange, that one so lonely from infancy to maturity should take such an objective view. Interesting people are met in this book, and the picture of Japan is charming without seeming untrustworthy.

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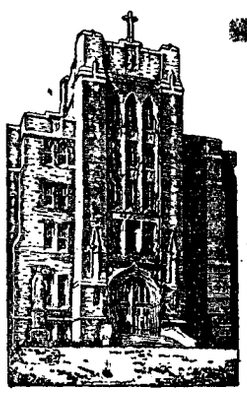

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AND COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Briefer Mention

Fear and Trembling, by Glenway Wescott. New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

THE ATTEMPT to write difficult philosophical observations about modern civilization—to which Keyserling, Spengler and Wyndham Lewis have devoted the better parts of their lives—falls flat with Wescott. Something too romantic and mercurial in his approach and method, something too superficial, neurotic and flippant in his Prometheanism, brings a charge of radical unsoundness against him. He has the pride of superman. The humility of soundness and sanity, not to say of religion, is absent. How well we know this point of view today: to accuse the Church of cynicism, to view the Church with unabashed hostility, yet to be the more cynical and credulous of the two. This is the kind of soi-disant impressionism which is so common and so fatiguing.

Play-boy, by Elizabeth Jordan. New York: The Century Company. $2.00.

HERE the theme which reverses the economic rôles played by man and woman in matrimony, is pleasantly, though not profoundly, developed. Mary Reynolds, who has achieved business and financial success, is the sturdy oak; David Kilmer, whom she saves from suicide, is the clinging vine. Their characters, as well as subsidiary ones, are well delineated in a story of the psychological impacts of two fundamentally different temperaments. The Kilmers win through to a workable—and believable—program of life.

The Lake Gun, by James Fenimore Cooper; with an introduction by Robert E. Spiller. New York: William Farquhar Payson. $6.00.

THIS is an elegantly gotten up little book of fifty-four pages limited to an edition of 450 copies. There are undoubtedly that many lovers of James Fenimore Cooper's work who will be pleased to obtain a copy for themselves. The story is said to be the last of Cooper's writtings to appear in print. In the introduction Mr. Spiller gives some interesting side-lights on the author's bitterness of heart in his last years and proposes some speculations as to the allegorical significance of the story as a veilled attack by Cooper on his enemies. Even in its brevity the story affords an excellent taste of the robustious talent of Cooper for writing, for observing nature in detail and for telling a story. The latter, in this case, is an ingenious exposition of the abiding value of a faith in Deity.

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